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COX CLOSING IN ON 1,000 CAREER VICTORIES

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Nov. 15, 2018) – Arguably one of the nation's fastest rising starts, Louisville native **Brad Cox** is two wins away from a major professional milestone: 1,000 career victories.

Cox, 38, is not far removed from his time as an assistant to trainer **Dallas Stewart** and has quickly soared to the top of the leading trainers in the nation by recording 671 wins in less than four years, nearly 70 percent of his career win total.

"I'm very happy with what our team has been able to accomplish recently," Cox said. "Obviously there are some major races out there we still want to win. A Kentucky Derby would be nice."

Cox grew up less than two miles from the Churchill Downs backstretch and graduated from Iroquois High School. It didn't take long for the lifelong Kentucky Wildcats fan to have his sights set on becoming a top trainer.

"I remember going to the track with my dad (**Jerry**) when I was a kid," said Cox, who is a father of three sons. "I always enjoyed horse racing and in high school was when I really decided I wanted to become a trainer. My dad liked coming to the track but I didn't grow up on the backstretch like many trainers. I grew up friends with trainer **Bobby Radcliffe's** son (**Rob**) and we would come to the track as kids."

Cox began his career as a hot walker and soon elevated to Stewart's assistant before starting his own stable in 2004. One of the early successes in Cox's career was when he teamed with claiming conglomerate **Midwest Thoroughbreds** as their private trainer. However, this path took Cox down several speed bumps to begin his career.

"We were down to two horses at one point when (Midwest) moved their horses," Cox said. "It was crazy but I never tried to let myself get too down and set the goal of claiming a horse each week to build back up."

Cox has a 27-percent win rate in 2018 with 218 victories, the highest mark in his 15-year career. One of the horses that vaulted Cox to one of the top trainers in the nation is Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI) and Breeders' Cup Distaff (GI) winner **Monomoy Girl**.

"She means a lot to us," Cox said. "She's huge for our career and the barn. We've never been to these type of places that she's taken us. It means a lot to a lot of people. Horses like Monomoy are a big part of the operation but you have to have the staff to be able to be successful. I have some great assistants that I trust and rely on. I think that's a major key as well to have a team to back you up."

Cox will have to wait until at least Saturday to win his 1,000th race with only one entrant on Friday at Fair Grounds but has six horses entered Saturday across Aqueduct, Fair Grounds and Churchill Downs.

"Hopefully we can get lucky and **My lady Curlin** can win Race 9 and **Mr. Misunderstood** or **Big Changes** can be No. 1,000 in the River City."

THANKSGIVING WEEKEND STAKES TAKING SHAPE – Six graded stakes races cumulatively worth \$1.4 million highlight closing week of the 21-day Fall Meet at Churchill Downs. Below are the probable entrants to each race, according to Assistant Racing Secretary and Stakes Coordinator **Dan Bork** and other published reports:

Thursday, Nov. 22 (Thanksgiving Day):

The \$200,000 Falls City Handicap (Grade II) for fillies and mares at 1 1/8 miles: **Dutch Parrot** (trainer Will VanMeter); **Honor Ride** (Grant Forster); **Mannerly** (Brendan Walsh); **Red Dane** (Charlie LoPresti); and **Skeptic** (Rusty Arnold II).

The \$100,000 Cardinal Handicap (Grade III) for fillies and mares at 1 1/8 miles on turf: **Amboseli** (James Cassidy); **Bonnie Arch** (Ian Wilkes); **Coachwhip** (Jack Sisterson); **Coco Channel** (Charlie LoPresti); **English Affair** (Rusty Arnold II); **Lipstick City** (David Fawkes); **Tricky Escape** (Lynn Ashby); and **Unbridled Escape** (Kelly Lynn Deiter).

Friday, Nov. 23 (Black Friday):

The \$500,000 Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare (Grade I) for 3-year-olds and up at 1 1/8 miles: **Believe in Royalty** (Larry Jones); **Bravazo** (D. Wayne Lukas); **Hawaakom** (Wes Hawley); **Hence** (Steve Asmussen); **Leofric** (Brad Cox); **Seeking the Soul** (Dallas Stewart); **Sightforsoreeyes** (Anthony Quatarolo); and **Storm Advisory** (Quatarolo).

The \$200,000 Mrs. Revere (Grade II) for 3-year-old fillies at 1 1/16 miles on turf: **Angel of Mischief** (Norm Casse); **Cool Beans** (Brad Cox); **Dark Artist** (Jane Cibelli); **Get Explicit** (Barbara Minshall); **High Tech** (Ian Wilkes); **Kabella** (Danny Peitz); **Over Thinking** (Vicki Oliver); and **Stella Di Camelot** (Chad Brown).

Saturday, Nov. 24 (Stars of Tomorrow II):

The \$200,000 Kentucky Jockey Club (Grade II) for 2-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles: **Blue Steel** (Dale Romans); **Current** (Todd Pletcher); **Dunph** (Mike Maker); **Kentucky Allstar** (Maker); **King for a Day** (Todd Pletcher); **Manny Wah** (Wayne Catalano); **Mick's Star** (Tom Amoss); **Plus Que Parfait** (Brendan Walsh); **Roiland** (Amoss); **Royal Urn** (Michelle Nihei); **Signalman** (Kenny McPeck) and **Synthesis** (Keith Desormeaux).

The \$200,000 Golden Rod (Grade II) for 2-year-old fillies at 1 1/16 miles: **Champagne Anyone** (Ian Wilkes); **Gold Credit** (Ignacio Correas); **High Regard** (Vicki Oliver); **Liora** (Wayne Catalano); **Meadow Dance** (Brad Cox); **Princess Causeway** (Wilkes); **Reflect** (Keith Desormeaux); and **Restless Rider** (Kenny McPeck).

JOHN ASHER WINS BIG SPORT OF TURFDOM AWARD – The **Turf Publicists of America** (TPA) announced Friday that the 2018 Big Sport of Turfdom award, which recognizes a person or group of people who enhance coverage of Thoroughbred racing through cooperation with media and racing publicists, will be presented posthumously to **John Asher**, the late vice president of Racing Communications at Churchill Downs and former president of the TPA (2000).

"The TPA's tagline is 'telling great stories since 1951,' and no one told horse racing's stories better than John Asher," said TPA President **Rhonda Norby**. "The Big Sport of Turfdom award is about honoring a person who promotes the sport in cooperation with the media, and there is no one more deserving for this award than John."

Asher, a lifelong racing fan, landed his dream job at Churchill Downs in 1997 and had served as vice president of Racing Communications since 1999. He was the face of the Kentucky Derby and Churchill Downs for nearly every journalist who covered the iconic race as well as other major events such as the Breeders' Cup, which was held four times under the Twin Spires during his tenure.

"The continued outpouring of love and respect for John has truly helped his family, friends and colleagues during this incredibly difficult period," said **Kevin Flanery**, president of Churchill Downs. "The Big Sport of Turfdom is a tremendous honor, and there is no individual who would have been more proud to be associated with such an esteemed group of previous honorees, many of whom John knew, worked with and greatly admired."

The Big Sport of Turfdom will be presented to John's wife, **Dee**, at the **University of Arizona Race Track Industry Program's** annual awards luncheon on Tuesday, Dec. 4, emceed by Santa Anita Park track announcer **Michael Wrona**. The luncheon is part of the **2018 Symposium on Racing & Gaming** at **Loews Ventana Canyon Resort** in Tucson, Ariz.

Asher, the irreplaceable ambassador for Churchill Downs and his beloved city of Louisville, passed away Aug. 27 at the age of 62.

"The way the racing community has embraced us since John's passing has been truly humbling, and for him to be honored for doing what he loved so much means a lot," Dee Asher said. "John would be thrilled with this recognition, especially coming from friends and colleagues in the industry."

The Big Sport of Turfdom has been presented annually since 1966. Last year's winner was **Penny Chenery**, the owner of the legendary **Secretariat** and a two-time winner of the award. Other previous winners include **Art Sherman**, the trainer of 2014 and 2016 Horse of the Year **California Chrome**; jockeys **Mike Smith**, **Pat Day**, **Chris McCarron**, **Bill Shoemaker**, **Angel Cordero Jr.**, **Eddie Arcaro** and **Gary Stevens**; trainers **D. Wayne Lukas** and **Jack Van Berg**; as well as other individuals who have made significant contributions to the sport, such as announcer **Tom Durkin**, author **Laura Hillenbrand**, broadcaster **Jim McKay**, turf writer **Joe Hirsch**, and actors **Tim Conway** and **Jack Klugman**.

DOWN THE STRETCH – Racing continued Friday with a first post of 1 p.m. (all times Eastern). There is a massive \$156,269 carryover in the 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot which gets underway in Race 5 at 3:03 p.m. ... The season finale of **"Inside Churchill Downs"** airs Friday at 6 p.m. on ESPN 680/105.7 and features trainer **Dallas Stewart**. Listen live at www.espnloouisville.com. ... Trainer **Ignacio Correas** reported Breeders' Cup Distaff fourth-place finisher **Blue Prize** is getting a rest for the remainder of 2018 but will resurface in the winter for her 6-year-old campaign. ... Trainer **Ben Colebrook** informed that Breeders' Futurity (GI) winner and Breeders' Cup Juvenile (GI) runner-up **Knicks Go** could run next in the seven furlong Marylander on Dec. 4 at Laurel Park but his plans are still in flux.